

CALIFORNIA ORGANIC PRODUCTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

California Department of Food and Agriculture
Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op
Sacramento, CA
February 18, 2003 9:30 a.m.

Members Attending

Rod Crossley
Bryce Lundberg
Bill Reichle
Gay Timmons
Lynn Bagley
Tim O'Keefe
Jim Waddell
Joseph Hall
Richard Krengel
Myron Cooper
Kim Burton
Sean Swezey

CDFA Representatives

Ray Green
Rick Jensen

Interested Parties

Charlie Hunter, Department of Pesticide Regulation
Anita Sauber, Marin County Department of Agriculture
Gene Livingston, Livingston & Mattisch for CTFA
Randy Pollock, Livingston & Mattisch for CTFA
Donna Bayliss, Bayliss Ranch
Sue TenEyck, Taurus Consulting
Paul Cultrerg, Sacramento Natural Food Coop
Janning Kennedy
Jake Lewin, QAI

ITEM 1: INTRODUCTIONS

Bill Reichle, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order, Introductions were made, and a quorum was established.

ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 2002 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Rod Crossley moved to accept the minutes as written. Sean Swezey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3: CHAIR REPORT

Gay Timmons has nothing significant to report.

ITEM 4: CDFA REPORT

Ray Green reported on the status of the State Organic Program application. Ray stated the California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA) submitted the application to the

National Organic Program. Ray provided the new address and phone number of the Division and Branch. Ray also discussed upcoming Committee vacancies. Ray gave an overview of the recent training he provided. Ray discussed the Mexican Fruit Fly and the Department's role in eradication with USDA.

The Board discussed the Newcastle disease and what is being done to control the contamination, including the Branch's efforts to assist.

Income numbers from a year ago comparing July through December of this year to July through December of last year, the Organic Program is maintaining a consistent cash flow. The program is receiving new spot inspections conducted by the counties. Ray Green stated he receives lab analysis reports of organic samples from the Department of Pesticide Regulation. The Board expressed interest in the sample results.

ITEM 5: DHS REPORT

Jim Waddell introduced Patrick Kennelly as his replacement. Patrick is the Chief of the Department's Food Safety Inspection Program. Jim provided an update on issues. DHS is receiving referrals. Jim indicated that the Cosmetic Industry is increasing its role with organic products. Jim suggests that the Committee include the Cosmetic Industry in the Committee. Jim discussed the modification to the Application Form.

The Committee discussed staffing. Staffing specifically related to the Committee's approval for funding of a couple of positions (clerical and inspector). Rick Jensen, Chief of Inspection and Compliance, clarified the Committee's role in staffing and issues the Branch faces in staffing the programs.

The Committee also discussed the Governor's directive regarding boards and committees only meeting once a year unless otherwise specified by law. Rick provided an update as to the actions the Branch is taking to ensure the Committee has the opportunity to meet as often as appropriate for the Organic Industry.

The Chair requested that Ray and DHS work together to ensure that no double dipping with retailer's registration is taking place. Also, retailers should not have to pay twice if they are producers. Ray will start monitoring the numbers.

ITEM 6: COPA COMMITTEE REFORMULATION REPORT

The Committee discussed the use of the NOSB Committee's model with the addition of Enforcement. The purpose of all committees is to examine the issues under these headings as they affect California registrants and the health of the industry as a whole. Enforcement includes: education/training, budget, and staffing for the Program.

a. Subcommittee Designation:

Processing Subcommittee—Members

Rod Crossley (Chairperson), Bryce Lundberg, Myron Cooper, Kim Burton, Gay Timmons, and Joseph Hall

-- Industry Personal Care Representatives
Cathy Beckly and Donna Bayliss

Materials Subcommittee—Members

Sean Swezey (Chairperson), Bryce Lundberg, Rick Melnicoe, Richard Krengel, Rod Crossley, Kim Burton, and Solomon Teklu

Enforcement Subcommittee—Members

Gay Timmons (Chairperson), Stacy Carlsen, Myron Cooper, Rod Crossley, and Lynn Bagley

-- Industry Representatives
Cathy Beckly and Jake Lewin

Ad hoc Subcommittee (Crop Identity Protection/Preservation)—Members

Bryce Lundberg (Chairperson), Joseph Hall, Rod Crossley, Rick Meinicoe, Gay Timmons, and Sean Swezey

—Industry Representative
Dan Cohen

Livestock Subcommittee—Members

Richard Krengel (Chairperson), Sharon Krumwiede, Rod Crossley – Telephone Meeting

Crops Subcommittee—Members

Bryce Lundberg (Chairperson), Timothy O'Keefe, Sean Swezey, Bill Riechle, Sean Feder

—Industry Representative
Donna Bayliss

Education Outreach – Retail and Consumer representatives at next meeting.

Gay Timmons will e-mail all Committee members and interested parties a list with all Subcommittees detailing members and chairpersons.

ITEM 7: COUNTY REPORT

Stacy Carlsen was unavailable to provide a report.

ITEM 8: NOSB UPDATE

Kim Burton updated the Committee on the recent the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) teleconference regarding the rule change “no farm should be required to ... lowering the feed requirement to 50 percent if feed is not available.” The certifier has to issue a noncompliance. USDA wants each state to enforce non-certified products because USDA has no enforcement authority of non-certified products. Truth in labeling becomes important because the producer is not certified.

A letter is going out to Secretary Lyons expressing the industries concerns about the NOSB issue. Ray agrees that in the past a letter was sent to USDA from CDFA.

Kim will use media to express how the industry feels about this issue, and she urges individuals to write letters to both the Federal and State Agricultural Departments.

The Committee discussed expanding the language beyond feed. The law change hurts the integrity of the industry. The Committee requested to see a copy of the language in this law change, and Ray Green will turn in a copy of the language to the Department legal office for review and counsel.

Bryce Lundberg moved to write a letter to Secretary Lyons with a courtesy copy to USDA. Sean Swezey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NOSB is pushing NOP to get a national list published. The Feed Register will be published in the next couple of weeks. It includes all the materials voted on last year. The next NOSB meeting is in May, and there are 14 materials to be reviewed. Lynn Bagley is working on education and training

ITEM 9: ORGANIC SITE PROTECTION/PRESERVATION

The Committee discussed organic site protection and preservation along with Biopreservation. There is reluctance to take action on Biopreservation on organic forms.

The Committee would like to widen the scope to include the following:

1. Do some mapping of organic sites and put information into a database.
2. Do a survey regarding contamination.

The Committee would like to turn the survey over to Ray to send to all registrants. Also discussed was the appropriateness of the survey as a tool to gather information.

The Committee discussed the standards for Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO). The standard for GMO once the product moves off site is zero tolerance. The product is not required to stay on site and it is difficult to control the movement of the biotech genes.

The Subcommittee suggests that the survey's opening paragraph be reworded to include livestock, producers, handlers, and processors. They also suggest changing number 14 on the survey to reflect where the plots are located. Please submit your comments to Bryce Lundberg with a courtesy copy to Sean Swezey by March 3, 2003.

The Committee requested CDFA to collect and assemble data pertaining to mapping organic sites throughout the state and GMO information.

Discussions included making mapping a requirement of registration and including it on the registration form.

Bryce Lundberg moved to make the wording changes to the survey and to have the survey go through CDFA for mailing by March 3, 2003. Rod Crossley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 10: ORGANIC CROP PROTECTION ISSUE

Discussed in Item 9.

ITEM 11: COST-SHARE ALLOCATION

Ray Green reports that USDA has \$1.7 million to expend based on a federal mandated formula for the cost share program on a first come basis with California receiving \$700,000. We have close to \$500,000 accounted for with certifiers. The cost will be much higher when everyone else is included. We will disperse on a first come basis, and we will notify the industry. Ray described the process that was used last year with other states to receive and process the cost share allocation.

Rick Jensen reports that Ray will be drafting a letter to USDA regarding the number of applicants and the percentages of distribution among all registrants expressing our concern that the money will run out before we get a chance to amend the contract requesting the rest of the money if dispersed to us. Rick would like USDA to give us a commitment to provide the money. Kim Burton offered to take the letter with her to USDA in Washington DC.

ITEM 12: NEW BUSINESS

- a. Budget cuts were not discussed.
- b. The Committee discussed staffing issues. The Committee voted two years ago for additional field staff report. Rick Jensen explained the hiring process, position allocation (available), and the scope of field classification.

Rick Jensen discussed consolidating support with the combined branch and redistributing the duties to get the work performed, and he discussed cross utilization of Shipping Point Inspection staff with other programs. Rick asked the committee to assess what their needs and put into a letter, and we will determine how to best accomplish the work.

- c. Assigned subcommittee chairpersons and scheduled a brief subcommittee meeting after adjournment to set up subcommittee dates.

Announcement—The Committee discussed that all states are creating their own certification mark to be used as products go through customs.

Announcement—Susanne Vaupel passed away January 22, 2003 of cancer. She was a long time member of the industry.

Announcement –Upcoming COPAC meeting dates are as follows:

May 20, 2003 August 19, 2003 - Salinas November 4, 2003

ITEM 13: ADJOURNMENT

Rod Crossley motioned to adjourn. Sean Swezey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ray Green, Supervisor
Organic Program